

# The THOREAU SOCIETY BULLETIN

## A THOREAU MEMORIAL

Biggest news of the annual meeting of the Thoreau Society on July 12th was our vice-president's announcement that the Thoreau-Alcott House had been offered for sale to the society by the Alcott-Pratt heirs for \$25,000. Competent men have adjudged the price to be a reasonable one and the society voted to empower the members of the executive committee and the board of trustees to investigate all possibilities to effect the purchase of the house. Under separate cover we have mailed to each member a plea for gifts and loans to make the purchase possible. And we must stress that we have only to August 15, 1948, to raise sufficient funds. May we once again urge each of you to help as much and as quickly as possible, not only with gifts or non-interest-bearing loans, but also with the names and addresses of people outside the society who might be able to help.

In the adjacent column we reprint a clipping from the Concord Journal of Sept. 22, 1938, giving some of the history of the house, to which should be added the fact that Thoreau lived in this house longer than in any other and died there, in the downstairs living-room in 1862.

We would welcome any suggestions  
(Continued. p.2)

Bulletin Twenty-four

Specimen # 24  
July, 1948 7/48

The Thoreau Society is an informal organization of several hundred students and followers of the life and works of Henry David Thoreau. Membership is open to anyone interested. Fees are one dollar a year. This bulletin is issued occasionally, usually quarterly, by the secretary. All the material, unless otherwise assigned, is compiled and written by the secretary.

The officers of the society are Raymond Adams, Chapel Hill, N.C., president; Mrs. Caleb Wheeler, Concord, Mass., vice-president; and secretary-treasurer:

Walter Harding

English Department  
Rutgers University  
New Brunswick, N.J.

## THOREAU ALCOTT HOUSE

By Mrs. Caleb Henry Wheeler

The lot of land on which this house stands was part of the farm inherited by Judge William Jones of Norridgewock, Maine, from the estate of his father, Captain Samuel Jones, the blacksmith, and was sold at auction, August 22, 1815, to H. H. Williams of Colrain for \$75.50. Williams sold it in October, 1819, for the same amount to Josiah Davis who had lately built a new house and store for himself where the Concord Academy is now located. On this lot, Davis built a house, barn and bookbindery, all of which he mortgaged to the Concord Bank in 1834. Meanwhile the map of 1830 marks the house "F. Potter", and he was presumably the bookbinder who rented the house from Josiah Davis. Davis became insolvent in 1838 and this "yellow house" was assigned in trust for the benefit of his creditors and finally quitclaimed to the bank for \$425. in 1845. The next year the bank sold it for \$875. to Henry L. Shattuck who turned it over to Daniel Shattuck in September, 1849. Shattuck sold it to John Thoreau for \$1450. and the Thoreau family lived here until Louisa Alcott bought it for her sister, Anna Alcott Pratt. Here John Thoreau and Henry David Thoreau died. The ell was used by the Thoreaus for the secret part of their pencil business and was fixed

up by Anna Pratt for her father, Bronson Alcott.

Dr. Edward Emerson's memoir of Thoreau says that the business management of the pencil business was in the hands of Henry's sister Sophia, and she carried on the whole direction after his death. Henry's discovery of a method of gathering the finest graphite by an air blast and mixing with potter's clay instead of wax, made a much improved pencil. In the end he rigged up a drill which made a hole for the lead like any modern pencil. Warren Miles was employed by the Thoreaus to do the routine work and later brought out the business. Secrecy was traditional in the pencil business from the time in 1812 when William Munroe mixed his graphite, glue, and bayberry wax behind locked doors in his little cottage on Church Green. The Thoreaus found that they could sell the finely ground graphite to electrotypers for ten dollars a pound while pencils were six dollars a gross. Henry probably stopped making pencils because the sale of graphite was more profitable. Sophia and Henry packed and addressed the graphite at the Main Street house so that the men at the factory would not know who the buyers were. His remark that he had made a perfect pencil so there was no need for him to make any more, was typical of him, but it also served to put off questioners who might have discovered this secret source of profit.

It was from a pen in back of this house that the Thoreau family pig escaped, as related in "Men of Concord" and his boat was kept on the river bank behind the house across the street.

Successive occupants continued to paint the house yellow until a few years ago and it still remains yellow on the picture post cards. Recent biographies of Bronson Alcott and of Louisa have much to say about the serene home which Anna Pratt made for her father in his last years.



The Thoreau-Alcott House.



(Cont.) to aid in the raising of necessary funds and also as to the use of the building if it is acquired. We would like to make it more than the usual museum of relics. Among the suggestions already offered are that an apartment be set aside for the use of students doing research on the Concord authors, the rent derived therefrom to be used for the upkeep of the house, and that a summer school of American literature be established somewhat in the vein of the old Concord School of Philosophy of Bronson Alcott's days. At any event, should the society succeed in purchasing the house it would bring about the preservation of one of Concord's most historic buildings, connected intimately as it is with both the Thoreau and the Alcott families. Never before has the Thoreau Society conducted a drive for funds of any kind. And it is a likelihood that never again will there be another opportunity to so fittingly pay tribute to Henry David Thoreau. We assure you that should the society be unable to raise sufficient funds to effect the purchase, all monies will be immediately returned to the donors. Send your checks to any of the officers of the society: Raymond Adams, Chapel Hill, N.C.; Mrs. Caleb Wheeler, Concord, Mass.; or Walter Harding, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J..

# # # # #

### THE 1948 ANNUAL MEETING

The 1948 annual meeting of our society was held on Saturday, July 10, in the vestry of the First Parish Church in Concord, Mass. The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m., with Dr. Adams in the chair. The secretary read the minutes of the 1947 meeting and the treasurer's report (A balance of \$479.78 on hand). Since there has long been a question as to the by-laws of the society, the secretary presented a new set, approved by the executive committee, and these were adopted by the meeting as the official by-laws of society. It was voted that the officers of the society incorporate the society as a non-profit-making institution. It was voted to recommend that Thoreau's Journals be republished and that a committee be appointed by the president to encourage and aid this project. It was voted to send an official vote of thanks to the commissioners of Middlesex County for their part in marking the newly discovered site of Thoreau's Walden cabin.

The nominating committee presented its report through Roger Payne and the following officers were elected: President, Raymond Adams, Chapel Hill, N.C., Vice-president, Mrs. Caleb Wheeler, Concord, Mass.; Secretary-treasurer, Walter Harding, Princeton, N.J.; other members of the Executive Committee: W.B. Conant and Roland Robbins of Concord, Mass.; Roland D. Sawyer, Ware, Mass.; H.W.L. Dana, Cambridge, Mass.; Edwin Way Teale, Baldwin, L.I.; and Rella Ritchell, Brooklyn, N.Y.

It was voted to continue the Thoreau Memorial Fund trustees. Raymond Emerson of Concord and Raymond Adams were re-elected to terms of six years each. Edwin Way Teale was elected to fill a vacant term of four years.

Following the morning business session, the members heard an address by Dr. Raymond Adams on "Emerson's House at Walden." This will be reprinted by the society.

At noon, the meeting was adjourned to the Thoreau-Alcott House on Main Street where a picnic lunch was held and where the members were taken on a tour of the house by Mrs. Kussin of Concord, a granddaughter of one of the Alcott "Little Women."

At 2 p.m., the meeting was opened again at the church vestry and Dr. Leon Hausman of Rutgers University delivered a lecture on "Thoreau on Monadnock" which will be printed by the society. This was followed by an extemporaneous reading of a short play, entitled "Walden," by Leonard Kleinfeld. Mrs. Leslie Anderson of Concord, Mass., then delivered a lecture on "The Thoreau Country," consisting of quotations from Thoreau's Journals and illustrated with kodachrome slides of the Concord countryside.

This last lecture was followed by a second session of the business meeting in which Mrs. Caleb Wheeler announced that the Thoreau-Alcott House was for sale for \$25,000 and urged that the society strive to purchase it as a memorial to Thoreau. It was voted that it was the sentiment of the meeting to purchase the house and that a committee made up of the executive committee

and the board of trustees explore all possibilities toward effecting the purchase of the house and to report by Sept. 1, 1948. The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 and informal walks to Walden Pond were announced.

#### BY-LAWS OF THE THOREAU SOCIETY

(These by-laws were adopted at the 1948 annual meeting.)

I. The name of this society shall be the Thoreau Society.

II. The purpose of this society shall be to honor Henry David Thoreau, to stimulate more general interest in his works, to coordinate research in his life and writings, and to act as a repository for Thoreauana.

III. The officers of this society shall consist of a president, a vice-president, and a secretary-treasurer, all to be elected for terms of one year, and a board of directors consisting of the three officers as stated and six others to be elected for rotating terms of three years, two of whom are to be elected each year. The election of these officers shall be conducted each year by a nominating committee of three members to be appointed by the president at least three months prior to the annual meeting. All members shall be invited to make nominations. A voting list of all those nominated and willing to serve shall be mailed at least one month before the date of the annual meeting to all the members, and must be received back by the nominating committee at least one week before the annual meeting. The result of the balloting shall be announced at the annual meeting and the candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared the duly elected officers of the society. A vacancy in any office shall be filled by the board of directors until the next regular election.

IV. The members of the society shall consist of any persons interested in Thoreau who shall apply for membership and continue to pay their annual dues or subscribe to a life membership in the society. Dues of the society shall be one dollar a year; life membership, twenty-five dollars.

V. A meeting of the society shall be held each year, on or near Thoreau's Birthday, at an hour and place to be designated by the president. Special meetings may be called upon the petition of twelve members and the recommendation of the board of directors. Written notice of all meetings shall be mailed to the members of the society. At all meetings of the society, the members present shall be a quorum.

VI. The duties of the officers and directors shall be to supervise the expenditure of the current funds of the society, the care of the repository, the issuing of bulletins, the preparation necessary for all meetings of the society, and in general to forward the purposes of the society.

VII. These by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members voting in any election of the society, provided that specific notice of the proposed change be sent to each member of the society.

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EMERSON'S HOUSE AT WALDEN by Raymond Adams. A paper read at the 1948 annual meeting of the Thoreau Society in Concord, Mass.

There are very few things more discouraging these inflated days than to happen upon an old newspaper of 1939 or perchance 1933 and read the prices of groceries. Then the evils of our time are driven home to us with a vengeance, for in those days a fixed income would buy something. There is somewhat the same effect in looking into the real estate prices for land on the shores of Walden Pond a century ago. Even Henry Thoreau needed not occupy another man's land at Walden; even he could have bought an acre without its affecting his "Economy" chapter in Walden adversely. The price of briar patch land at Walden Pond at the time Thoreau went to live there was exactly \$8.10 an acre.

Everyone knows that Thoreau went to live on Emerson's land and that he cut down Emerson's trees with Alcott's axe. But we have not bothered to ask how Emerson happened to have that land, whether he had any idea of using it himself, and whether he had any other land at Walden. These are not impertinent questions for a Thoreau Society, for if Emerson had not had the land at the northwest corner of the pond, Henry Thoreau might not now be



associated with the word Walden at all. Not every landowner in Concord in those days would have wanted Henry Thoreau building and living on his land; he wasn't regarded as a very good fire risk.

The casual and almost accidental way Emerson acquired the land Thoreau used is a matter that is cleared in two Emerson letters. There is the letter Emerson wrote to his brother William on October 4, 1844:

I have lately added an absurdity or two to my usual ones, which I am impatient to tell you of. In one of my solitary wood-walks by Walden Pond I met two or three men who told me they had come thither to sell and buy a field, on which they wished me to bid as purchaser. As it was on the shore of the pond, and now for years I had a sort of daily occupancy of it, I bid on it and bought it, eleven acres, for \$8.10 per acre. The next day I carried some of my well-beloved gossips to the place, and they deciding that the field was not worth anything if Heartwell Bigelow should cut down his pine grove, I bought, for \$125 more, his pretty wood-lot of three or four acres, and am now landlord and water-lord of fourteen acres, more or less, on the shore of Walden, and can raise my own blackberries. (Cabot, A Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson, pp. 492-3)

There is something very human about that transaction. A poor poet (and Emerson was particularly in financial straits that year) went for a walk in his favorite woods and fell victim of some real estate sharpers so that he came home owner of eleven acres of briarpatch. And then his gossips forced him to make the best of his bad bargain by buying a woodlot at four times as much per acre. It is like the Hickory, N.C., story of Banker Cilley whose city hall friends ganged up on him. A stray and decrepit mule had been found wandering in the village square. Advertising and inquiry indicated that it was nobody's mule. So the town fathers came to auction it off in the square where it had been found. They asked Mr. Cilley to come out of the bank and start the bidding at ten dollars so as to get the auction going. He obliged. "How much am I bid for this mule?" "Ten dollars." "Sold to John Cilley!" But, as in Emerson's case there was a sequel to the auction. Banker Cilley, feeling indeed silly, took his mule behind the bank and tied it to a post until he could figure out what to do with it. And before noon a man came into the bank to tell him that his mule had died. It cost Cilley, as owner of that dead mule, twelve dollars to have the carcass hauled off.

Emerson got a better bargain when he was persuaded to bid, nor did he wonder what to do with his new land. Almost at the same time as he wrote to his brother he wrote also to his good friend Thomas Carlyle:

And when shall I show you a pretty pasture and woodlot which I bought last week on the borders of a lake which is the chief ornament of this town, called Walden Pond? One of these days, if I should have any money, I may build be a cabin or a turret there high as the tree tops, and spend my nights as well as days in the midst of a beauty which never fades for me. (The Correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and Ralph Waldo Emerson, II, 77-78.)

He did not get the money within six months, and by that time Henry Thoreau was busy on that land cutting down a few pine trees, hewing timbers, laying the footings we so recently have seen uncovered, and in general moving in on Emerson's woodlot and briarpatch. Mr. Canby suggests that this was not an unprofitable arrangement for Emerson himself, that there must have been some understanding whereby Henry would clear the fields of briars in return for living in the woods. Whether there was such a formal agreement or not, the field did get cleared of briars.

But within another six months Emerson seems to have had some money on hand. Unable to enjoy the Heartwell Bigelow woodlot now that it was occupied, or perhaps unwilling to disturb Thoreau in his use of the land, Emerson bought more ambitiously across Walden Pond and, though he bought the land in the fall, he still called it a new plaything when he wrote to Carlyle about it on May 14, 1846:

I too have a new plaything, the best I ever had,--a wood-lot. Last fall I bought a piece of more than forty acres, on the border of a

little lake half a mile wide and more, called Walden Pond,--a place to which my feet have for years been accustomed to bring me once or twice a week at all seasons. My lot to be sure is on the further side of the water, not so familiar to me as the nearer shore. Some of the wood is an old growth, but most of it has been cut off within twenty years and is growing thriftily. In these May days, when maples, poplars, oaks, birches, walnut, and pine are in their spring glory, I go thither every afternoon, and cut with my hatchet an Indian path through the thicket all along the bold shore, and open the finest pictures.

My two little girls know the road now, though it is nearly two miles from my house, and find their way to the spring at the foot of a pine grove, and with some awe to the ruins of a village of shanties, all overgrown with mullein, which the Irish who built the railroad left behind them. At a good distance in from the shore the land rises to a rocky head, perhaps sixty feet above the water. Thereon I think to place a hut; perhaps it will have two stories and be a petty tower, looking out to Monadnock and other New Hampshire Mountains. There I hope to go with book and pen when good hours come. I shall think there, a fortnight might bring you from London to Walden Pond. (Correspondence of . . . Carlyle and . . . Emerson, II, 101-2.

Emerson persistently hoped that Carlyle might come to live in Concord. He repeats that hope in letter after letter. When he had bought the 1844 wood-lot he wanted to show it to Carlyle. When he planned in 1846 to put a hut on the second wood-lot, it immediately occurred to him that Carlyle might share the study with him and he wrote to tell Carlyle how quickly one might get from London to Concord. Emerson's great personality drew one after another of his contemporaries to Concord to live for a longer or shorter time. It is interesting even now to think how very nearly it came to pass that Thomas Carlyle should be counted one of the Concord authors.

There is another recurrent note. Over near Thoreau's cove Emerson had an idea of a turret high as the treetops. Here he mentions a two-story hut or a "petty tower." It may have been Emerson's own idea to build a tower. He had by this time been to Italy and may have seen the towers there. Later, Hawthorne in Italy would be so attracted by an Italian tower that he would conceive the idea of adding one (with proper apologies for the difference between the architecture of a Concord carpenter and that of an Italian Renaissance architect) to Wayside, where it still is.

I suspect, though, that the tower idea was not original with Emerson nor imported from Italy. The hut was projected in 1846 and Thoreau was its architect. By 1846 he was the greatest living authority on Walden architecture. We know pretty well what Thoreau would have planned; and it would not have been a tower. Nor did he reckon without his host--Emerson was his host at Walden--for there is not the least evidence in Emerson's study or anywhere else that Waldo Emerson longed for towers, ivory towers or painted pine ones.

May it not be that the turret as high as the trees on the north side of Walden Pond and the tower looking toward Monadnock from the south side were products of that ingenious builder Bronson Alcott, who in his time had built a good many towers on castles in Spain and a good many structures in imagination under which he had neglected to put the foundations Thoreau specified in such cases. Remember, Emerson hadn't added woodlot to briarpatch in his first purchase of land at Walden until pushed to it by his cronies. He didn't mention the turret until after that; and one of the cronies was almost certainly Bronson Alcott. There is unimpeachable evidence about the 1846 "petty tower" Emerson mentioned to Carlyle. The evidence is in Alcott's own journal, in two entries early in May, 1846. First there is the description of the site itself:

May 3. Emerson called, and I walked with him to the haunts near Walden Water, and he led me by the wood-paths to the summit of the ledge on which he purposes to build himself a lodge for study and writing. The prospect was commanding for our champion country--Monadnock on the



North, Wachusett and the spires of Groton and Sudbury on the West and South West, and near was the Concord River, and close by on the opposite side was Thoreau's cot. It was a fit spot for a poet's lodge. We descended by a hatchet-path to the dell near the railroad, to a spring of water near the railroad, some distance from the hilltop. Here he hopes to ensure retirement and uninterrupted seclusion for writing. (The Journals of Bronson Alcott, p. 178)

And then there is Alcott's own suggestion of the tower in his journal five days later:

May 8. Evening. Emerson came in to consult me on the lodge he intends building on the peak of his woodlot, near Walden Water. He showed me H. Thoreau's design, to which I added another story as a lookout. (p. 179)

Mr. Emerson, as so often in more poetic matters, listened to Bronson Alcott and, six days later as we have seen, suggested in his letter to Carlyle that the lodge might have its lookout. Yet, that is the last one can find about the lookout or about the lodge itself. Could it be that that practical, experienced house builder at Walden, Henry Thoreau, showed his elder friend how impractical it would be to add a petty tower and how unwise it would be to perch too high a building on a rock ledge? It is not an impossible conjecture. And then could it be that kind Mr. Emerson, who was especially tender toward the feelings of his neighbor Alcott, left the house in the planning stage and never built it at all so as not to hurt the feelings of Alcott of the towering mind? That is not an impossible conjecture either. Certainly he delayed it until other affairs intervened, and yet he allowed Alcott to build him another study.

Bronson Alcott was in a building mood those days. He was inordinately fond of a summer arbor he had fashioned for himself by weaving willow osiers into an intricate pattern (May Alcott sketched that arbor once upon a time). He took Emerson there and wrote in rhapsody that suggests the oriental books he was reading at the time, "When I became an osier, and supple to the hands of creation, then I wrought me an osier tent and was happy under it in a spiritual day." (Journals, p. 184) He was not happy long, though; for he still thought about towers. Five days later Thoreau came to call, to be entertained also in the osier tent. But when he had caught his breath, Alcott led him from the tent and took him to the hilltop behind the house and "showed him the site of my proposed 'lookout'." And then, I suppose at the prompting of Alcott, Thoreau climbed a tree and himself became a "lookout" for Alcott, telling him how wide the view would be if the lookout were twenty feet high, indeed a "petty tower."

But that tower, like all Alcott towers, never got built. Forgetting the house at Walden for a time, saving the moral of that for later, it may not be amiss to devote a paragraph to the most fantastic structure ever built in Concord, the Emerson Summer House, a task to which Bronson Alcott devoted his entire summer and autumn of 1847 and (according to Odell Shepard) "enjoyed more than any other that he ever undertook." If the house was in any way a sop to Alcott for not having a part in building a house on the ledge at Walden, it is very pertinent to discuss it. Thoreau figures in the Summer House carpentry and almost lost Alcott's friendship for his pains. Dr. Edward Emerson gives the best account of the Summer House:

Mr. Alcott, in 1847, fashioned from gnarled limbs of pine, oak with knotty excrescences and straight trunks of cedar, a fantastic but pleasing structure, some hundred steps from the house, for a retired study for his friend.

In this work he was helped by Mr. Thoreau, whose practical mind was chafed at seeing a building, with no plan, feeling its way up, as it were, dictated at each step by the suggestion of the crooked bough that was used and necessarily often altered. He said, "I feel as if I were nowhere doing nothing." When it was nearly done someone said, "It looks like a church." The idea was not to be tolerated by the transcendental architect, so the porch had to come down for its look of untimely sanctimony.

Thoreau drove the nails, and drove them well, but as Mr. Alcott made the eaves curve upward for beauty, and lined the roof with velvet moss and sphagnum, nature soon reclaimed it. Indeed Madam Emerson naively called it "The Ruin" when it was fresh from the hand of the builder. In spite of its real beauty, which drew many people to see it, the draughts (for it was full of apertures for doors and windows) and the mosquitoes from the meadow close by made it untenable, and my father never used it as a study. (Emerson in Concord, pp. 127-8)

Edward Emerson only recalled the structure. Thoreau was there and contributed the nailing that held the fearful rustic building together. May Alcott's drawings of the building (in her Concord Sketches, 1869) give some idea of its twisted symbolism and its gables and apertures for the muses. Ralph Waldo Emerson was in England while the building went forward. Thoreau, caretaker at the Emerson house wrote thus about its construction:

Alcott has heard that I laughed, and so set the people laughing, at his error, though I never laughed louder than when I was on the ridge-pole. But now I have not laughed for a long time, it is so serious. He is very grave to look at. But, not knowing all this, I strave innocently enough, the other day, to engage his attention to my mathematics. "Did you ever study geometry, the relation of straight lines to curves, the transition from the finite to the infinite? Fire things about it in Newton and Leibnitz." But he would hear none of it,--men of taste preferred the natural curve. Ah, he is a crooked stick himself. He is getting on now so many knots an hour. There is one knot at present occupying the point of highest elevation,--the present highest point; and as many knots as are not handsome, I presume, are thrown down and cast into the pines. Pray show him this if you meet him anywhere in London, for I cannot make him hear much plainer words here. He forgets that I am neither young nor old, nor anything in particular, and behaves as if I had still some of the animal heat in me. As for the building, I feel a little oppressed when I come near it. It has no great disposition to be beautiful; it is certainly a wonderful structure, on the whole, and the form of the architect will endure as long as it shall stand. I should not show you this side alone, if I did not suspect that Lidian had done complete justice to the other. (Familiar Letters (1906), 136-7)

Surely it will be evident that all was not harmony between the two builders. After all, when two "crooked sticks" seek to agree on how to arrange other crooked sticks into a building, they are apt to rub each other the wrong way--and rubbing sticks together is sure to generate some heat. It must be pretty clear now why Emerson gave up his idea of building on the ledge at Walden once Francis Alcott began "improving" on what were probably very simple and workable plans drawn up by Thoreau.

I am inclined to think that it is just as well that Emerson did not build his house at Walden. That ledge is as wild now and as unvisited as when he cut his Indian path with his hatchet. Thoreau did build his house on the near side of the pond, and people visit the site with vulgar curiosity or with veneration. There is a danger that attaches to shrines and holy sepulchres. It is the danger that Emerson felt when he said, "Love of the best corrupts into worship of his statue." Walden is not significant because of a few square feet of sandy hillside north of its little cove nor because of what once was a briarpatch and then a hay-field. Walden is not significant as a place at all. It is not significant even because of some ugly little brown or black books that sell at a high premium on the rare book markets--books published in 1849 and 1854. It is significant only because the word Walden suggests some thoughts a man had once.

Where he had them doesn't really matter. What matters is that he did have them. How rare the books are in which those thoughts found lodging doesn't really matter. What matters is that they found lodging--and have continued to find lodging in other minds. And for that purpose a ten cent dog-eared copy of Walden will do as well as a first edition in pristine condition. It will do far better, for it got dog-eared by planting and replanting thoughts in mind after mind, while the pristine copy stayed pristine by affecting no mind at all.

It does not matter that Emerson's Walden house never got built. His books got written. And without benefit of roof over his head in Walden Woods, his thoughts got thought. For he did not abandon Walden Woods when he abandoned the idea of building there. After he had said "'Tis time to take in sail," six years after Thoreau's death, aging Waldo Emerson was in 1868 still going to his woodlot at Walden and finding there the values that had charmed him like new discoveries in 1844 and 1846:

The only place where I feel the joy of eminent domain is in my woodlot. My spirits rise whenever I enter it. I can spend the entire day there with hatchet and pruning shears making paths, without a remorse of wasting time. I fancy the birds know me, and even the trees make little speeches or hint them. Then Allah does not count the time which the Arab spends in the chase. (Journals, X, 261)

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Dr. Leon Hausman's paper on "Thoreau on Monksnoek," also delivered at the annual meeting, will be included in an early issue of the bulletin.

# # #  
Albert E. Lownes, P.O. Box 1531, Providence, R. I., is engaged upon a study of the first editions of Thoreau's first book, A Week. He would appreciate information as to the location of any copies dated either 1849 or 1862, whether or not they are in their original binding, and whenever possible their provenance.

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For those of you who wish to build up your own Thoreau libraries, the secretary has on hand the following items for sale:

Reprint of Bulletins 1-9 . . . . .	\$ .50
Bulletins 10-24, each . . . . .	.25
Reprint #1 (Curtis, "Reminiscences of Thoreau") . . . . .	.25
Reprint #2 (Jones, "Thoreau's Incarceration") . . . . .	.25
Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience" . . . . .	.25
Hoover's "Centennial of Thoreau" . . . . .	.10
Excerpt from <u>Fortune</u> , May, 1944. . . . .	.10

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The Concord Free Public Library now owns three of the paintings which were used as illustrations for Thoreau's Walden. These paintings by H.C. Wyeth are of the carpenters on Hubbard's bridge, Miss Mary Moody Emerson and Thoreau, and little Johnny Warden and Thoreau.

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On May 19, 1944, Mr. Francis H. Allen delivered a paper before the Club of Odd Volumes in Boston on "Thoreau's Editors: History and Reminiscence." Older members of the society will recall that Mr. Allen delivered this paper before the Thoreau Society at one of its annual meetings in Concord and that it is still on the agenda of the society to be published.

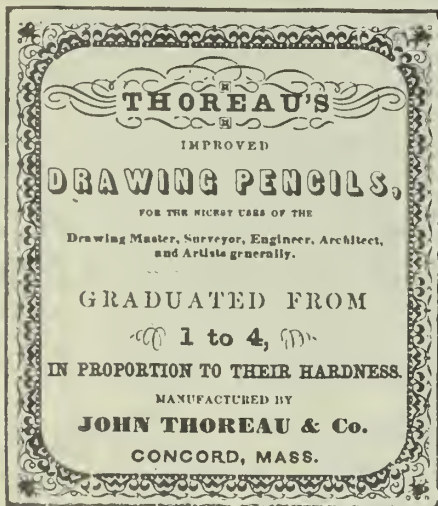
# # #  
"Each man's necessary path, though as obscure and apparently uneventful as that of a beetle in the grass, is the way to the deepest joys he is susceptible of; though he converses only with moles and fungi and disgraces his relatives, it is no matter if he knows what is steel to his flint."

--Thoreau's Journals, X, 186.



# THOREAU PENCILS

The opportunity for the society to purchase the Thoreau-Alcott House has aroused interest once again in Thoreau pencils, for the back wing of the house was long used by the Thoreau family as a pencil shop. We are indebted to Mrs. Caleb Wheeler for this reproduction of an original Thoreau pencil wrapper which is in her personal collection. We might add that there is another style of Thoreau pencil wrapper known and at a later date we may be able to reproduce it too in our bulletin.



## INFATUATION WITH THE SOUND OF ONE'S OWN WORDS DEPT.

"From this September afternoon, and from between these now cultivated shores, those times seemed more remote than the dark ages. On beholding an old picture of Concord, as it appeared but seventy-five years ago, with a fair open prospect and a light on trees and river, as if it were broad noon, I find that I had not thought the sun shone in those days, or that men lived in broad daylight then. Still less do we imagine the sun shining on hill and valley during Philip's war, on the war-path of Church or Philip, or later of Lovewell or Paugus, with serene summer weather, but they must have lived and fought in a dim twilight or night."--Thoreau in A Week (Riverside Edition, I, 427-8).

"But from this July afternoon, and under that mild exterior, those times seemed as remote as the irruption of the Goths. They were the dark ages of New England. On beholding a picture of a New England village as it then appeared, with a fair open prospect, and a light on trees and river, as if it were broad noon, we find we had not thought the sun shone in those days, or that men lived in broad daylight then. We do not imagine the sun shining on hill and valley during Philip's war, nor on the war-path of Paugus, or Standish, or Church, or Lovell, with serene summer weather, but a dim twilight or night did those events transpire in. They must have fought in the shade of their own dusky deeds."--Thoreau in "A Walk to Wachusett" (Riverside Edition, IX, 183-4)

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Robert Stowell, Poor Farm Press, Calais, Vt., has asked us to announce that the Thoreau Gazetteer reviewed in the last bulletin now sells for \$1.00. Copies may be ordered directly from Calais.  
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